

Learning About Careers: Food and Beverage Services

Top Things to Know

If you like cooking or being part of a team and meeting people, a food and beverage services career might be right for you. Here are some important facts:

- Jobs in the food and beverage services industry are at places that provide meals, snacks, and drinks to customers. Examples are catering companies, restaurants, and food trucks.
- Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, restaurants had to close for periods of time or offer carry-out and delivery only. The industry improved after vaccines became available. Now restaurants need workers.
- Most food and beverage services workers make less money on average than those in other jobs. However, chefs and head cooks can earn salaries that are higher than average.
- For many jobs in this industry, no education beyond high school is needed. For others, training at a community college, technical school, or culinary arts school is required.



What You Can Be

Many kinds of workers are needed in the food and beverage services industry. Here are some examples:

- **Bakers** make foods such as breads, cakes, and cookies. They work in bakeries, restaurants, and grocery stores. They know how to bake and how to decorate baked goods.
- **Chefs** are in charge of foods made in restaurants. They create recipes, plan menus, and make sure everything tastes good. Some chefs own their own restaurants.
- **Restaurant cooks** prepare restaurant foods. They follow recipes, using processes like baking, boiling, frying, and steaming. They also arrange foods on plates.
- **Restaurant managers** are responsible for how restaurants operate. They oversee workers. They order food, beverages, and supplies. They also keep records and manage a restaurant's money.
- **Servers** take orders from restaurant customers and serve them food. They answer customers' questions and communicate food orders to workers in the kitchen. Servers need to be friendly and patient and able to work quickly.

Where You Can Work

Here are some places near you where people have jobs in the food and beverage services industry:

- **Picnk** is a business that makes healthful meals for people and delivers the meals to them to be eaten at home over time. Picnk customers can get breakfasts, lunches, dinners, desserts, and snacks. Picnk's owner oversees the company and develops its menus. Workers include food preparers and delivery drivers.
- **Twist Cupcakery** is a bakery that has cupcakes, cakes, and other sweets. Customers can choose from many cupcake flavors that change each day. The bakery owner is also the chief baking officer. Other workers help with baking, decorating, and selling the products.
- **Wheat Penny Oven and Bar** is a restaurant that specializes in interesting pizzas. Wheat Penny has other kinds of foods too, like appetizers, salads, sandwiches, pastas, and plate dinners. People in all kinds of food and beverage services careers work at Wheat Penny.

A Day in the Life: Chef

Learn more about a typical day for one kind of food and beverage services professional:

James is the chef-owner of a ghost kitchen, a new kind of restaurant where food is cooked but there is no place to sit and eat. The restaurant's specialty is bowl meals inspired by foods from around the world. James and his staff take orders over the internet. They prepare meals, and then customers pick up the meals at a drive-through window. As always, James's first task this morning was receiving the fresh ingredients he would need for the day. As produce and meats arrived, he labeled and stored each item. Between deliveries, he and his staff began cleaning and cutting vegetables, cutting meat into portions, and making sauces. By 11 a.m., they were making bowl meals. There were Asian bowls nearly overflowing with noodles, wontons, pork, and vegetables. There were African bowls stuffed with yams and lentils and topped with stretchy bread. There were island bowls filled with spicy chicken, black beans, and pineapple. The staff worked all afternoon and evening filling customers' orders. James moved around the kitchen making sure everything went well and helping make dishes. After the restaurant closed, the staff put away ingredients and cleaned the kitchen. James went to his office to do computer work. He placed orders for ingredients and updated the restaurant's financial records. Locking up at 10 p.m., James was the last to leave. It was a long day, but James's enthusiasm for sharing good food with others makes every day go fast!



Learn More

What else do you want to know?

Now that you have read this fact sheet, what are some questions you have about working in the food and beverage services industry?

What did you learn?

Do research online or talk to someone who works in the food and beverage services industry to answer your questions. Then write two new things you learned from your research.
